

Lancaster Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119137
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339362
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Onyon

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Wright
Headteacher	Mr Paul Gabriel
Date of previous school inspection	6 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at, amongst other things, the school's data records, policies and minutes of governing body meetings, and the notes of the School Improvement Partner's visits. Returned parental questionnaires were analysed from 74 parents or carers.

- the consistency and quality of teaching and the curriculum, and the impact on standards, particularly in writing
- the impact of the use of assessment upon the achievement of all pupils
- the impact on pupils' learning of the school's work with a range of partners.
- the quality of provision and children's achievement within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized school. Most pupils are White British. The number of pupils from minority ethnic heritages has increased since the previous inspection but is still very small, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for children who start in the Reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they reach the age of five. The school has Healthy Schools and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) school accreditation and is in receipt of the Learning Excellence award. On the school site is a privately managed nursery which was not subject to this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Lancaster Road Primary School provides a good education for its pupils and has some outstanding features: the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, and the excellent support, guidance and care it provides. Outstanding safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils feel exceptionally safe in school. Work with a wide range of partners makes a consistently excellent contribution to pupils' good achievement and well-being. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage serves the children well and they make good progress. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' learning is good, they make good progress and achieve well. As a result attainment in the current Year 6 is above average in mathematics, science and reading. Last year, test results of pupils' writing dipped below average and the school set about tackling this anomaly. As a result standards of writing in the current classes are improving and pupils are benefiting from greater opportunities to write at length in English lessons. This improvement has yet to be monitored and consolidated. There are insufficient regular planned opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress due to the good quality of the support they receive.

Pupils' behaviour in class and around school is good. They are conscientious pupils who want to learn. They gain an excellent understanding of their own personal safety and what they need to do to stay fit and healthy. They take on responsibilities in school well and have good opportunities to help in the local community. Punctuality to school is good but levels of attendance are in line with the national average. Considerable efforts are made by the school to improve attendance and rates are rising. Because of their above average academic standards and how well they develop their enterprise capabilities pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

Teaching is of good quality with some excellent features and pupils learn well. Where teaching is outstanding teachers demonstrate a very good understanding of how well pupils have progressed and assess their learning throughout lessons, often talking to pupils about their perceptions of how well they are doing. However, this is not always the case. Pupils are not always provided with feedback to enable them to fully understand what they need to do to improve their work. The school is developing its assessment processes to track, more effectively, the progress of all pupils to ensure they are doing as well as they can. Currently, teachers lack a shared understanding of the levels attained by pupils in their writing. The curriculum is good and clear links are beginning to be identified across a range of subjects. One or two aspects in the process of development, such as strategies to teach writing, have yet to be evaluated to check their impact. The school's pastoral support and guidance for pupils are outstanding and

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lead to all pupils, including the more vulnerable, making good and often very good progress in their personal development.

The school has good capacity to improve and this is evident in the improvements made since the last inspection. The school has sustained its good provision and outcomes for pupils. The evaluation of itself is robust and has led to an accurate analysis of its performance. There are several strengths in leadership and management and these are reflected in the good and outstanding outcomes for pupils. The headteacher's drive and clear vision, along with a strong professional partnership with all staff, have been particularly successful in providing a very caring and supportive ethos for all pupils. Governors are effective in providing a good balance of support and challenge.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in writing throughout the school by:
 - evaluating the impact of current strategies and taking appropriate actions
 - regularly checking samples of pupils' writing so that teachers' judgements are an accurate match with one another
 - planning regular opportunities for independent writing across a range of subjects.
- Ensure that the assessment procedures currently being developed become established practice so that:
 - they enable the school to evaluate the quality of provision over time and demonstrate the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils
 - all pupils are consistently provided with feedback so they know precisely what they need to do to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

The good behaviour of pupils contributes to harmonious and industrious activity during lessons. Positive and constructive relationships all round enable pupils to work effectively, independently and in groups. Where offered, pupils respond well to class teachers' guidance and the pace of learning was observed to be generally brisk, enabling pupils to make good progress. Pupils are keen to discuss their learning and progress and take pride in their work. Although standards and progress in writing fell at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2008, assessment information, pupils' work and lessons seen by inspectors demonstrated that overall progress is good. Pupils in Year 6 are well on the road to attain above average standards.

Pupils are extremely positive and say they feel safe at school and this is confirmed by parents. Pupils are clear what to do if they are concerned about particular matters and comment that their experience has shown that where a concern has been raised, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils report that they appreciate the need for a healthy lifestyle and are keen to participate in physical activity during school time, after

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school and at home. An example of pupils' interest in this area is the 'fun run club', with large numbers of pupils joining in.

The contribution of pupils to the school and wider community is good. One major example arose when the school took part in the 'Voltage' business enterprise project, deciding to focus on environmental issues, recycling and helping the homeless. Lanky's litter squad' won the outstanding enterprise award; they were interviewed on local radio and some visited London to meet with a government minister. The project helped develop pupils' awareness of socio-economic disadvantage close to their area.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of pupils is strong: pupils know the distinction between right and wrong and work cooperatively in lessons and beyond. They are mature in their behaviour and are appreciative of the environment that surrounds their school. Pupils are respectful to others and are very keen to support charitable causes. Cultural diversity is effectively promoted, for example, establishing links with a school in Sri Lanka.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources to stimulate learning well. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson one class eagerly responded to the teacher's role play, as Banquo, in scenes from Macbeth, whilst the other class, in responding to clips from a filmed version, persuaded their audience to consider the actions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The approaches helped all pupils to successfully express their point of view. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to act as resources for each other, for example, through discussion in pairs to develop each other's thinking. Teachers provide pupils with clear feedback so they are motivated to work effectively. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to ensure pupils are fully involved in activities and this affects their rate of learning. Pupils are not always offered feedback that helps them to consider how they might best improve their work. Teaching quality is monitored well at different levels throughout the school, with a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

The use of assessment is good overall. The school holds considerable good-quality information about pupils learning, their personal development and the standards they attain. Recent developments have led to the analysis of pupils' progress in writing through the scrutiny of individual samples of pupils' work. However, the scrutiny does not ensure consistency between teachers in their judgements of progress.

The curriculum enables pupils to achieve well and provides particularly well for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The range of enrichment activities, within the curriculum and beyond, is good. For example, pupils refer to their excitement in welcoming theatre groups and other visitors. They say that this reflects the many opportunities they have to learn through meeting the visitors and engaging with the activities. Pupils, however, say their enjoyment of writing could be better if they were given more opportunities to work independently. The timetable provides an appropriate balance between subjects, placing sufficient emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Pupils' good achievement in ICT has been supported by the development of resources and extended opportunities. The quality of work is recognised in the receipt of the ICT mark for schools.

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school's work has a very positive effect on pupils' personal development. Close monitoring of pupils' personal development and well-being ensures that all pupils are supported to a very high standard. Relationships are respectful and very positive. Links with services to support vulnerable pupils are excellent. Transition arrangements between all key stages are effective and pupils are provided with high quality guidance and support to prepare them for the next stages in their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>The quality of teaching</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	<p>2</p>

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has worked effectively with staff to improve performance. For instance, through the development of subject leaders' roles, the school has greater capacity to identify and tackle underperformance in pupils. Staff, pupils and parents talk of Lancaster Road as possessing a family atmosphere, where all work together and share a common vision to continue to improve. It ensures equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils. Effective and robust tracking and target-setting systems are being refined to enable the school to evaluate the quality of provision over time and demonstrate more clearly the progress made by individuals and groups of pupils. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well.

The school meets relevant safeguarding regulations and duties extremely well. Systems for safeguarding and risk assessment are robust, and are regularly updated. Effective liaisons within the school and with support agencies ensures pupils are safe and feel secure. The school's procedures are used, by the local authority, to model excellent practice for other schools. Pupils are provided with lessons throughout the school on safety from organisations such as the police and the fire service. The governing body is proactive. It asks challenging questions about the school's performance and supports the school well. It has sought the views of parents and has been instrumental in exploring proposals to extend and further improve outdoor provision.

A strength of the school is its partnership work: involvement, with other schools, in considering the contents of a 'Children's Charter', culminating in the production of support materials and launch of the charter. In partnership with Lancaster University pupils participated in an 'aspirations week', thinking ahead to future life choices. These exercises effectively offer a window on to a world outside that otherwise the school would not be able to provide. The strategy on community cohesion increasingly embraces the celebration of other cultures and faiths of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, enabling pupils to recognise distinctions and common features between others' backgrounds and their own. Outcomes for pupils are good or better and resources are used effectively, with the result that value for money is good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The teachers provide a wide range of well planned activities that are skilfully adapted to enable children of different abilities to achieve their full potential in all areas of learning. Opportunities for role play are very effective and thoroughly enjoyed by the children. Exciting areas are created in the classrooms to encourage role play. A hive of activity provides lots of opportunities for the children to choose activities. The staff know the children well and give their personal, social and emotional development the highest priority. Children are encouraged to be open and inquisitive.

As they enter the Reception classes the attainment of most is slightly below that expected for their age. The children make good progress thanks to the good quality of the provision, so that by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children attain the Early Learning Goals expected for their age.

Behaviour is good. Children willingly share their equipment and listen carefully to the views of others. Teachers take every opportunity to develop learning from comments made by the children. A good example is the way 'superstar' and 'star of the week' children take on responsibilities in the classrooms. The teaching of early reading is given high priority and the outcomes achieved by the children are good. Children enjoy outdoor activities and often play vigorously with other children at playtimes. The outdoor area is limited and in wet weather restricts the opportunities the children have to use the facilities available. The school is taking action to address this.

Staff compile detailed records of observations and examples of work for each child. 'Learning journals' provide a regularly updated record of each child's development. This evidence provides a clear view of what each child can do. The staff regularly refer to assessment to determine what work should be planned next. Leadership and management are good, providing a common sense of purpose to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are positive about the work of the school. They appreciate the emphasis given to social and moral development and the family atmosphere. They strongly support the school's excellent procedures for safeguarding and comment on how much their children enjoy school. Some expressed a desire for more information about their child's progress and felt that more account might be taken of their suggestions. Inspection evidence indicates that there is good information about pupils' progress and opportunities for parents to offer suggestions. Most believe their children are making good progress and that teaching is good. The inspection team agree.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lancaster Road Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 421 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	78	25	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	90	80	23	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	44	56	50	6	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	78	71	29	26	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	84	74	29	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	66	60	40	36	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	62	39	36	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	54	52	42	40	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	63	40	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	44	52	48	5	5	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	49	45	55	50	6	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	66	61	38	35	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	75	69	33	30	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school for its recent inspection. We appreciated your politeness and enjoyed talking with you. We were impressed that you demonstrated many mature attitudes in your personal development. You have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. Very well done! We have judged your behaviour to be good. In addition to these very positive attributes, you also make good progress in your learning and, in all but writing, you attain better than expected standards by the time you leave for secondary school. So how does this happen? First of all your school is led and managed well. All adults play their part in the smooth running of the school and wanting the best for you. Your headteacher, the teachers and teaching assistants give good help and support and the governors keep a very close eye on the school. Through the hard work of the adults the school provides you with outstanding levels of support, guidance and care, and good teaching. The subjects you learn are interesting too and it is good to hear about your involvement in the school council, the eco council and the mini enterprise projects. We know you enjoy these activities, along with your after-school clubs and the many visitors.

So what does the school need to do to get even better? We have asked your leaders to build on the school's existing strengths and improve your standards in writing further. We have asked the school to use its assessment information to give everybody feedback so that you know how to improve your work. We know you will do your part in helping to do these things. After all, you attend a good school with parts that are outstanding. Congratulations!

Every good wish for the future!

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